



# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **REPRESENTATIVE ALLEN ANNOUNCES BILL TO HELP COMPLETE BACKLOGGED CHILD WELFARE CASES**

**STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX (Friday, January 15, 2016)** – Representative John Allen yesterday introduced HB2389, which if signed into law, would speed up the process of completing the thousands of backlogged cases with the Arizona Department of Child Safety.

Two years ago there were 13,024 cases with the Department of Child Safety that were non-active and for which documentation was not entered in the child welfare automated system. After a \$45 million appropriation from a special session of the Legislature, the number of backlogged cases has unfortunately increased. The standing number since the last report in mid-December was an astonishing 14,392 number of backlogged cases.

To counter this increase in backlogged cases and more importantly to help the children at risk, Representative Allen has dropped HB2389 to ensure the cases get properly handled and the children get the help they desperately need.

HB2389 will allow the Department of Child Safety to issue requests for proposals for private contractors to assist in administering the backlog of cases. The private contractor will complete the investigation according to department guidelines and policies. With the new private contractors working hand-and-hand with the Department of Child Safety it will allow the most possible child welfare cases to be investigated while also providing relief to the caseworkers who are overloaded at the Department of Child Safety.

Representative Allen stated, "14,392 backlogged cases is 14,392 too many. We must take action to help these children. This bill will provide the necessary resources and skilled workers to further aid the Department of Child Safety in their work."

Senator Debbie Lesko has introduced similar legislation to increase efforts to solve these inactive cases. SB1142 is an identical bill that will add another measure in the mission of completing child welfare investigations.

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